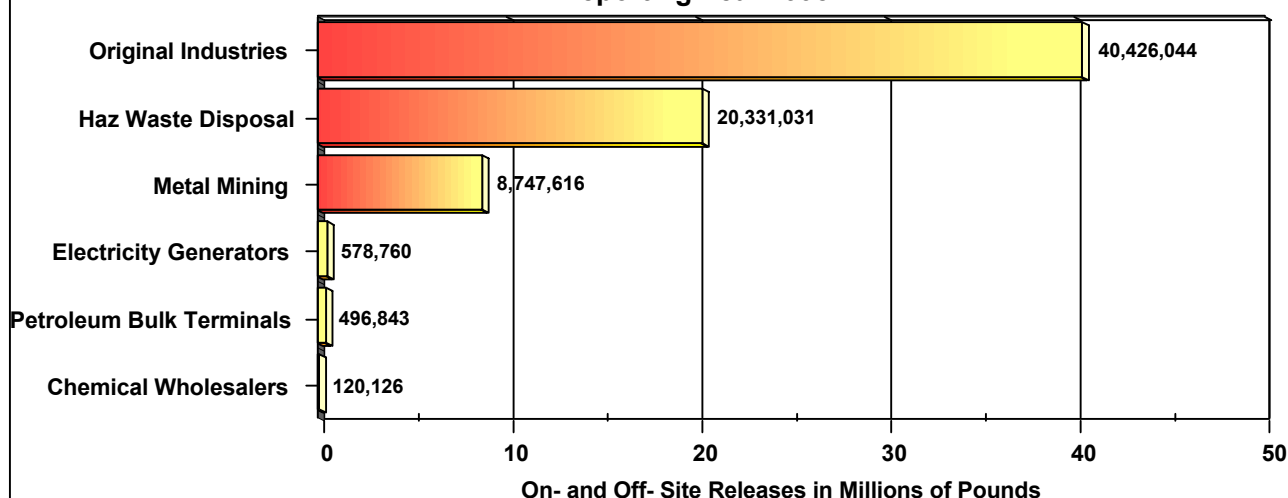




# California Report: 1998 Toxics Release Inventory

**U.S. EPA Region 9**  
Arizona, California,  
Hawaii, Nevada,  
and the Pacific  
Islands

**TRI On-site and Off-site Releases\* in California**  
Reporting Year 1998



## The 1998 Public Data Release

EPA has just made public the 1998 data on toxic chemicals that were released to California's air, water and land. This information comes from the Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) program, commonly known as community right-to-know. In addition to information from the manufacturing sector and from federal facilities, this marks the first year that data is available on seven new industry sectors. In California, 1,499 facilities reported 70.7 million pounds of toxic releases\*.

*\* Release is defined as the amount of a toxic chemical released on-site (to air; water; underground injection, landfills and other land disposal), and the amount transferred off-site for disposal. When comparing data from year to year, the data is normalized to account for changes in the list of reportable chemicals and other variables.*

It is important to note that release should not be directly equated with risk. To evaluate risk, release data must be merged with information about chemical toxicity, site-specific conditions, and exposure. In addition, this data does not indicate whether a facility is violating environmental laws. Many of the substances reported through this program are subject to state and federal regulations designed to protect human health and the environment.

## Original Industries

Manufacturing industries have been reporting their releases since 1987 and federal facilities started reporting in 1994. Between 1995 and 1998, releases for these industries dropped 22.4% in California. In the past 10 years, releases have fallen 75%. Every year since the program's inception, there has been a steady decline in reported emissions in the State.

For 1998, 1,376 manufacturing facilities reported on 40.4 million pounds of toxic releases. Most of these

releases (66%) were to the air; 19% were transferred off-site for disposal; and 10% were released to water.

### **New Information—the 1998 Data**

The 123 facilities reporting for the first time detailed 30.3 million pounds of releases, accounting for about 43% of the State's releases. The new sectors are: metal and coal mining, electricity generation, commercial hazardous waste treatment, solvent recovery, petroleum bulk terminals, and wholesale chemical distributors.

### **Commercial Hazardous Waste Treatment and Solvent Recovery Services**

The new industry sector with the biggest impact in California is commercial hazardous waste treatment facilities/solvent recovery services. 16 facilities reported 20.3 million pounds of releases, or 29% of the State's total releases. 97% of the releases from this sector went to RCRA Subtitle C regulated landfills. Three of the top five facilities in the State for total on- and off-site releases were commercial hazardous waste treatment facilities.

Hazardous waste treatment facilities treat, store, and dispose of hazardous waste. (Note: the reporting requirements apply only to those facilities regulated by subtitle C of RCRA). These facilities handle large quantities of materials which may contain heavy metals, asbestos and other chemicals. Solvent recovery services collect, recycle, and redistribute solvents. Since many of the facilities are co-located with commercial hazardous waste treatment facilities, their releases were aggregated.

### **Metal Mining**

The second largest new industry for releases is metal mining. 8 mines reported on 8.8 million pounds of releases, or 12% of the State's total releases.

Many mines extract, move, store, process, and dispose of large amounts of waste rock and ore--materials which often contains low concentrations of naturally occurring metals. The vast majority of this material is placed in surface impoundments or on the land, and the metals are reported as on-site releases to land. This previously buried material is exposed to potential leaching by rain, snow, and acid mine drainage, and must be carefully managed and monitored to prevent any surface water or ground-water contamination. There are also air releases from ore processing and metal refining operations.

### **Electricity Generating Facilities**

The third largest new sector for releases in California is electricity generation. 16 electricity generating facilities reported on 579 thousand pounds of releases, or 1% of the State's total releases. 67% of these releases were to the air. In California, air releases of acids and the disposal of metal-containing ash to on-site landfills made up the majority of this sector's releases.

Many of California's utilities do not need to report their toxic releases because they do not use coal or oil as their primary fuel for combustion. Only facilities that combust coal or oil to generate electricity for distribution in commerce need to report to the Toxics Release Inventory. Both coal and oil contain metals that are released to the air when the fuel is combusted. The ash that remains after coal is combusted will also contain metals. Large quantities of this ash may be disposed of in on- or off-site landfills, or returned to coal mines for disposal there. Toxic chemicals may also be formed during the combustion process. These include zinc oxide and acid aerosols like hydrochloric acid, hydrogen fluoride and sulfuric acid.

### **Petroleum Bulk Terminals**

50 petroleum bulk terminals reported 497 thousand pounds of releases, with 95% released to the air. Chemicals most frequently reported were typical constituents of gasoline: benzene, toluene, ethyl benzene, xylene, and methyl tert-butyl ether.

### **Wholesale Chemical Distributors**

33 wholesale chemical distributors reported 120 thousand pounds of toxic releases, 91% of these to the air. In the course of distributing chemicals, many wholesalers repackage and sometimes reformulate their products.

### **Coal Mining**

No coal mines reported to the Toxics Release Inventory in California.

**Top Facilities for Releases**

The top 10 facilities for on- and off-site releases in California are:

Chemical Waste Management (Kettleman City, Kings County) with 12.5 million pounds

Quemetco, Inc. (City of Industry, Los Angeles County) with 4.1 million pounds

Safety-Kleen (Westmorland, Imperial County) with 4.1 million pounds

McLaughlin Mine (Lower Lake, Lake County) with 3.9 million pounds

Safety-Kleen (Buttonwillow, Kern County) with 3.6 million pounds

CR Briggs Corp. (Ballarat, San Bernardino County) with 2.8 million pounds

Exxon Co. USA Benicia Refinery (Benicia, Solano County) with 1.8 million pounds

Molycorp Inc. (Mountain Pass, San Bernardino County) with 1.7 million pounds

Louisiana-Pacific Corp. Samoa Pulp Mill (Samoa, Humboldt County) with 1.6 million pounds

Chevron Prods. Co. Richmond Refy. (Richmond, Contra Costa County) with 1.3 million pounds

**On-line Access**

For national information on data release, see

<http://www.epa.gov/tri>

The TRI data is available through the Envirofacts Warehouse, EPA's premier Internet site for distributing environmental information at

<http://www.epa.gov/enviro>

For general information on the Toxics Release Inventory, including reporting requirements for businesses, go to

<http://www.epa.gov/region09/toxic/tri>

**Information and Assistance**

We will be more than happy to answer your questions and assist you in learning more about the Toxics Release Inventory program in Region 9.

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